

REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated February 27, 2006, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on May 27, 2006. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below. Claims 1 – 9 and 19 - 30 are pending in the application. Claims 3-6 and 19-21 have been withdrawn by the Examiner.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1 and 24 as being anticipated by *Alder*, U.S. 2,898,088. In response, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 24.

As amended, claim 1 includes the limitation of an object stopping assembly selectively movable between a first position where the bore proximate the object stopping assembly has an inside diameter and a second position where the bore proximate the object stopping assembly has a smaller inside diameter. *Alder* does not disclose this limitation. Rather, *Alder* merely discloses a tool having a flexible sleeve "76" that is configured to sense the pressure of a drilling stream in the tool. (See Alder, col. 5, lines 55-63) In fact, the flexible sleeve disclosed in *Alder* is not selectively movable between a first position and a second position since the sleeve moves only in response to fluid pressure in the bore. As amended, claim 24 includes the limitation of a biasing member operatively attached to a barrier member. *Alder* does not disclose a biasing member attached to a barrier member. As the foregoing illustrates, *Alder* fails to teach or disclose all the limitations of claims 1 and 24. This failure precludes *Alder* from anticipating claims 1 and 24. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the 102(b) rejection of claims 1 and 24 be removed and the allowance of the same. Additionally, since claims 2 and 7 – 9 depend from claim 1, these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1. Further, claims 22-23 are allowable for similar reasons as claim 1.

The Examiner rejected claim 24 as being anticipated by *Murray*, U.S. 4,276,931. In response, Applicants have amended claim 24.

As amended, claim 24 includes the limitations of a barrier member selectively movable between a retracted position and an extended position and a biasing member operatively attached to the barrier member. *Murray* does not disclose these limitations. Rather, *Murray* merely discloses a mill tool having a junk basket with movable fingers "28". As shown in Figures 1A and 1B of *Murray*, the movable fingers "28" are disposed below a valve ring "68" in order to catch junk that circulates through the tool when the valve ring "68" is closed. As the foregoing illustrates, *Murray* fails to teach or disclose all the limitations of claim 24. This failure precludes *Murray* from anticipating claim 24. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the 102(b) rejection of claim 24 be removed and the allowance of the same. Additionally, since claims 25 and 26 depend from claim 24, these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 24.

The Examiner rejected claim 27 as being anticipated by *Holden*, U.S. 3,148,731. In a phone interview on May 26, 2006, the Examiner indicated that claim 27 was rejected under *Holden* instead of *Murray* as indicated on page 3 of the Office Action.

Applicants have amended claim 27 to include the limitation of slowing the rate of descent of the object as it approaches a closed downhole deployment valve by using the object stopping assembly. *Holden* does not disclose this limitation. In contrast, *Holden* discloses a tool having a setting ring "15" that catches a ball "33" when the valve "25" is in an open position. (See *Holden*, Figure 3) In fact, the valve "25" must be in the open position to allow the ball "33" to pass therethrough in order to start the cementing operation. (See *Holden*, col. 4, lines 20-45)

As the foregoing illustrates, *Holden* fails to teach or disclose all the limitations of claim 27. This failure precludes *Holden* from anticipating claim 27. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the 102(b) rejection of claim 27 be removed and the allowance of the same. Additionally, since claims 28, 30 and new claim 31 depend from claim 27, these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 27.

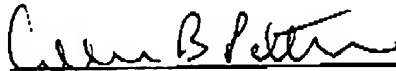
PATENT
Atty. Dkt. No. WEAT/0258.P2***Allowable Subject Matter***

The Examiner objected to claim 29 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 29 depends from claim 27 and therefore is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 27.

Conclusion

The references cited by the Examiner, alone or in combination, do not teach, show, or suggest the invention as claimed. Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,



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